

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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BY CABLE

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 THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
 (FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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- Activities on Chinmen Airfield have not been hampered since the start of current hostilities on 3 September. The airfield is believed to be out of the effective range of present Chinese Communist artillery emplacements. Its dirt strip surface is in good condition and its drainage has been greatly improved. The field is capable of handling C-46's, C-47's, PBV's and AT-6's on a regular basis; F-47's and even B-26's could use the strip for emergency landings only. There are no defensive positions or anti-aircraft emplacements around the field.
 - The consensus is that the east coast of Chinmen presents the likeliest area for a Chinese Communist amphibious assault (B-opinion). Nationalist defenses for the eastern beach are to the south, in the Liaolo Bay area, which is under the protection of Nationalist naval units. If the Nationalist Navy stays and fights, it could prevent an amphibious landing in this area (B-opinion). Nationalist ground defenses in the Liaolo Bay area are very light since reliance is placed on the navy and the bay is a logical evacuation area. The northern and western beaches present difficulties because of their extensive mud flats.
 - The Chinese Communists have thus far not used high-angle or timed fire on Chinmen. Much of the Chinese Communist shelling has been ineffective because it has fallen in areas of secondary military importance. The only effect the shelling of the Shuit'ou Beach area, intensively on 3 September and sporadically since, has been to destroy a sunken LST pier and a 2,000 ton freighter tied to it. No significant amount of fuel or supplies has been destroyed. The shelling, however, has denied the use of the Shuit'ou anchorage to the Nationalists as a foul-weather refuge. The major reason for the heavy Chinese Communist shelling of the area seems to be simply that it is within the range of their guns.
 - Since 3 September no swimming reconnaissance or other small raid activity against Chinmen has been observed.

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7. Chinmen is divided into six defense areas. The 68 Division garrisons the northwest area; an officer reserve regiment and the 134 Regiment, the southwest; the 69 Division, the central plain; the 100 Regiment, 33 Division, the northeast; the 45 Division and an officer reserve regiment, the southeast; and the 34 Division minus one regiment, Little Chinmen. None of the divisions are up to strength. There are four 4.2-inch mortar companies, three in the northwest sector and one in the northeast. There are six 155-mm. guns in the western sectors, five of which are effective. Three of these guns have been sent to Chinmen since the Chinese Communist bombardment began. There is one tank battalion on Little Chinmen and one tank battalion and one regiment in the eastern sectors of Chinmen. The total strength of forces on Chinmen is 24,000 men (B-4). In general they are soundly deployed, with troops located as strategically as the terrain will allow (B-opinion).
8. The morale of Nationalist troops on Chinmen is not low but could be better. Morale was improved with the initiation of counter-battery fire and airstrikes on the Amoy beach areas.

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